

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 DAMASC 03031 201505Z

46

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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R 201440Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2223

INFO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

S E C R E T DAMASCUS 3031

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, MASS, SY, UR

SUBJECT: SYRIA: SHIFT OF SOVIET MILITARY ADVISORS

1. ROMANIAN AMBASSADOR, DR. EMILIAN MANCIUR, INFORMED ME DECEMBER 20 THAT SOVIETS HAD IN RECENT WEEKS REPLACED THEIR TOP MILITARY ADVISORS IN SYRIA. NEW CHIEF ADVISOR HE IDENTIFIED AS FORMER DEPUTY MILITARY COMMANDER OF MOSCOW REGION. STATED THIS GENERAL OFFICER HAD BROUGHT WITH HIM TEAM OF SIX NEW GENERALS TO SYRIA, ALL OF WHOM ARRIVED WITHIN THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS.

2. ACCORDING TO MANCIUR, FORMER CHIEF ADVISOR HAD BEEN, PRIOR TO HIS SYRIAN ASSIGNMENT, COMMANDER OF THE SOVIET FORCES IN BYELORUSSIA AND KNOWN AS A TRADITIONALIST IN MILITARY TACTICS WITH PARTICULAR EXPERTISE IN TANK WARFARE. THE ROMANIAN COMMENTED THAT THE FORMER CHIEF ADVISOR HAD UNDOUBTEDLY CONTRIBUTED TO RIGIDITY OF SYRIAN TANK WARFARE TACTICS EVIDENT IN THE OCTOBER WAR WHICH HAD PROVED SO ILL ADAPTED TO GOLAN EHIGHTS TERRAIN.

3. COMMENT: REGRET THAT THIS EMBASSY DOES NOT HAVE RECORD OF NAMES EITHER OF THE FORMER CHIEF ADVISOR OR OF THE NEWLY APPOINTED ONE. ASSUME BOTH ARE KNOWN TO US INTELLIGENCE. ROMANIAN TELLS ME THAT THE

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SECRET

PAGE 02 DAMASC 03031 201505Z

NEW ADVISOR IS CIRCULATING FREELY AT VARIOUS RECEPTIONS.

WILL KEEP EARS OPEN.

4. SINCE FORMER ADVISOR WAS KEPT IN PLACE FOR FULL YEAR
AFTER OCTOBER WAR SEEMS DOUBTFUL THAT HE WAS HELD RESPONSIBLE
BY EITHER MOSCOW OR DAMASCUS FOR ANY SYRIAN SHORTFALL
IN PERFROMANCE.
MURPHY

SECRET

NNN

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